



**Sixth Judicial Circuit  
of Maryland  
50 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville, Maryland 20850**

KATHERINE D. SAVAGE  
JUDGE

(240) 777-9372

February 12, 2009

Fred Evans  
President, MCPS Retirees Association  
P.O. Box 4367  
Rockville, Maryland 20849-4367

RE: Juvenile Court Mentoring Program

Dear Mr. Evans;

Please take a minute to read this plea for help, and then pass this letter along to everyone you know at work, home and in the neighborhood. The juvenile court mentoring program badly needs mentors to work with our court-involved youngsters. We serve kids who are abused, neglected, or otherwise in need of a mature and supportive adult – both children in need of assistance and delinquent children. The YMCA Youth & Family Services is functioning as our day-to-day coordinating agency, with Otto Perez as the program director. The partnership includes the Circuit Court of Montgomery County, the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services and the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services.

All the judges who work in juvenile court witness the daily need for mentors. The children are at-risk youth who need the consistency and direction that a mentor can provide. The program is looking for a one-year commitment and there is training and ongoing support for mentors. Since the program's inception, we have had children waiting for adult mentors. We currently have approximately 20 youngsters paired up with a mentor. In a county with almost a million people, we can do better than that. We always seem to need more male mentors, and also bilingual volunteers.

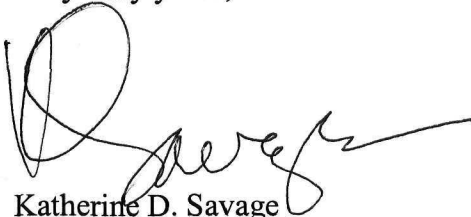
I have included two testimonials from Mr. Perez that emphasize how children in our program benefit from a caring and dedicated mentor:

*Tyra \*\* was referred to us by a Child Welfare social worker. She was living in a group home in Rockville, when she was matched with her mentor, Oduwa. Initially, Tyra was very guarded and for several weeks it was difficult to reach her. She would not be at the group home or return phone calls or would just give one-word responses to Oduwa. Oduwa continued to reach out and made many phone calls to convince Tyra that she was committed to mentoring her. On their visits, Tyra and Oduwa would go to movies, shopping, and enjoyed meals together. Tyra indicated an interest in going to college, so Oduwa took her to college fairs and they actually visited a college. At a New Orleans street fair in DC, they had a breakthrough moment. Tyra is from New Orleans. She started talking about growing up there and telling Oduwa about things she remembered. Tyra has really opened up since then, and mentor and mentee continue to work together.*

*Mary\*\* was also referred to the program by a Child Welfare social worker. She was living in a group home in North Potomac, when Athena became her mentor. She and Athena have been together for almost two years. When they met, she was a freshman in high school having difficulties with her confidence and her grades. She worried that she would be held back a year. However, once she and Athena started working together, she began studying more frequently. She passed the ninth and tenth grades and is now looking at community colleges.*

I'm sure you can see from Tyra's and Mary's stories that adult volunteers can make a difference in a child's life. We need more Oduwas and Athenas. Please let us add your name to our mentor list. If you are willing and able to make a commitment to be a mentor, please contact the Mentoring Coordinator, Ottoniel Perez at 301-585-5700 (ext. 2574) or by cell at 202-438-5051 or drop him an e-mail at [Ottoniel.Perez@ymcadc.org](mailto:Ottoniel.Perez@ymcadc.org). You can also call my chambers at any time for further information. Thank you in advance for your interest.

Very truly yours,



Katherine D. Savage